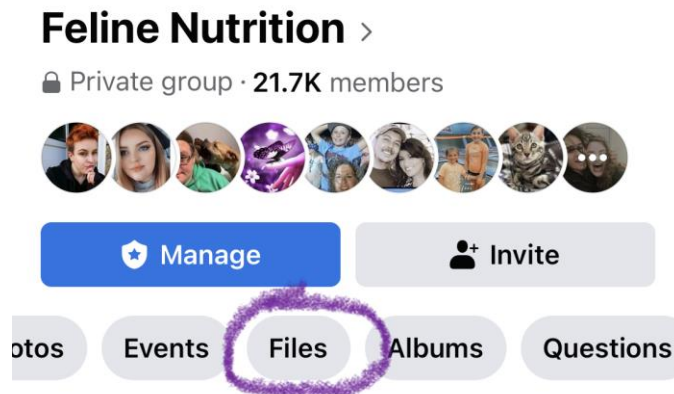


Frequently Asked Questions in

[Feline Nutrition group](#)

This is a summary of information that our members can find in [the Files section of our group](#) – please refer to them first if you have any follow-up questions. If you still have a question, please use the search bar before creating a separate post.



What should my cat eat?

A diet appropriate for an obligate hypercarnivore: a moisture-rich, high-protein meat based, low-carb diet – never any dry food. In this group, we support providing this moisture-rich diet in various ways, including canned food, rehydrated freeze-dried, commercial raw, home cooked, using a meat completer, following a recipe, PMR+, or a whole prey diet.

Why is dry food bad for my cats?

Dry food was created as a way to feed cats conveniently, not as something that they benefit from. Dry food is depleted of moisture that cats critically need, typically much higher in carbohydrates than other types of cat food, it's much more processed, often has bio-inappropriate plant-based ingredients, has additives that make it unnaturally palatable and addictive, and it's challenging to store in a safe way.

Any food that is fed without moisture is considered dry; it includes freeze-dried and air-dried food. Although their ingredients are much better than in “dry food”, when fed dry, they are still moisture depleted therefore pose the same dehydration risk that regular kibble.

Please refer to this document for links with information: [NO DRY FOOD EVER](#)

We encourage you to watch our recorded Facebook Live video, where Tom Rothwell, DVM explains to Feline Nutrition members why dry food should be avoided and why it was invented: [Tom Rothwell, DVM live](#)

You can also review posts with #dryfoodkibble topic.

Doesn't kibble clean my cat's teeth?

No, kibble doesn't clean teeth, but wet food alone doesn't clean teeth either. Brushing your cats' teeth (using a toothpaste and a toothbrush appropriate for cats) and professional dental cleanings when recommended are always the best to help keep teeth healthy, as only these methods reach the gum line where the disease occurs. We highly encourage to introduce species-appropriate ways to improve dental health: meaty bones, raw food chunks (gizzards, hearts, chunks of muscle meats) or whole prey. Please refer to this document with links on [dental health](#) and this post for details: [Raw meaty bones as dental treats](#), and see #dental topics. And be aware that your cat can be genetically predisposed to a dental disease.

My cat used to drink lots of water, but stopped after transitioning to a moisture-rich diet.

If your cat drinks lots of water, then it most likely means he's severely dehydrated already. Cats have evolved from desert dwelling ancestors and they have a very low thirst drive, and are designed to take all needed moisture from their food, they essentially eat their water. If a cat eats dry food, he will never drink enough water to make up for its loss.

It's completely normal that cats transitioned to a moisture-rich diet don't drink water from their separate water dish, as it's not natural for them. The fact that your cat stopped drinking water is the proof that properly hydrated cats don't drink. However, water must be available for them all the time.

Some cats on the moisture-rich diet still drink, and it isn't necessarily concerning, especially if you live in the hot and/or dry climate. But if drinking water is a new behavior, your veterinarian should be consulted.

See #water and #waterintake for posts about it.

How do I transition my cats to a moisture rich diet?

If you offer your cat food that he's never had before and expect him to eat it eagerly, you may end up being very disappointed :) Cats are imprint feeders and they may not eat anything they haven't been taught to recognize as food. Any change must be

introduced slowly, by exposing your cat to a new food – either by placing it next to your cat's food or mixing it in it. This must happen at cat's pace, not yours. With time, patience and positive attitude, even the most stubborn and kibble-addicted cats will transition to a moisture-rich diet. In difficult cases it can take months, so prepare for a lengthy process and don't expect quick results. It's a marathon, not a sprint. Please refer to our transition guides for more information: [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#). See #transition topics for posts.

How much food should my cat eat?

For cats fed commercial canned food, we adopted Dr. Lisa Pierson's formula to calculate cat's daily caloric need: (cat's ideal weight in pounds x 13.6) + 70 = amount of calories to feed per day. Now you need to check the amount of calories the canned food has (it's typically written on a label) and measure the appropriate amount to feed. This is a general guideline that you might need to adjust based on your cat's individual situation, energy level, whether she needs to gain or lose weight. Or if you've learned to determine your cat's body condition yourself, you can use Dr. Pierson's different advice: "Too fat? Feed less. Too thin? Feed more." See more at [CatInfo Weight](#).

For cats fed raw food, you should feed 2%-4% of cat's body weight, depending on activity level and body condition.

How much food should my kitten eat?

As a general rule, kittens can eat as much as possible in each feeding, in scheduled meals, several times a day. Kittens rarely get overweight, but it's not completely impossible – in such instance kitten's food amount should be controlled. Please refer to our kitten file for more information: [Feeding kittens](#).

Can I feed my cats raw meat?

Absolutely yes! We consider raw feeding the most appropriate and natural way to feed cats. Make sure the meals you feed are nutritionally complete and balanced and take sanitary precautions while preparing raw food. Please refer to the files explaining your options: [Introduction to raw feeding](#), [PMR and DIY sources](#), [recipes](#), [meat completers](#), [raw feeding 101 tips](#), [PMR+](#), [whole prey](#).

I would like to feed commercial, pre-made raw food; what are my options?

Both frozen raw and freeze-dried food are convenient options and a great way to start raw feeding journey. We have lists of commercial raw food, but unlike our canned food list, it's not a list of our recommendations, but a list of options for you to explore further: [Commercial frozen raw list](#) and [Raw freeze-dried brands to explore](#). Please use

the group search bar to find opinions on food that you consider trying and post questions if you don't find an answer you're looking for.

Isn't salmonella a concern with raw food?

Cats are designed to eat raw meat – they have a short digestive track and a highly-acidic stomach - and are able to handle the normative bacterial load of raw food. Here is some info about salmonella and e.coli with tips on how to handle raw to minimize the risk for humans: [PerfectlyRawSome - Salmonella](#) and [E.Coli](#).

What brands of canned food do you recommend?

We recommend rotating brands that are high in protein, moderate in fat and low in carbs (less than 12% DMB), with the most appropriate ingredients (grain – free, no carrageenan, no meat or by-product “meal”), that use AAFCO minimums as nutritional guidelines (for USA).

Our recommended list can be found here. Please refer to the tab relevant to your location (USA; Canada; UK, UE, Asia): [Recommended canned food list](#).

Why isn't (x) brand on the recommended file list?

Most likely because it didn't meet the criteria (low carbs, good ingredients, meeting AAFCO minimums). It's also possible that a manufacturer didn't provide the group with information needed to calculate their nutrients and we were unable to determine some crucial values (like carbs). If you think that brand you chose should be on the list, please use group search option to look for posts about this brand and post a question if you don't find an answer you're looking for.

Ideally, we'd like our members to learn to recognize a good canned food themselves. To learn how to calculate carbs amount in the cat food, please refer to this file: [Nutritional Values Explained](#). To get the most accurate data for your calculation, we encourage to contact the food making companies asking for a Typical Nutrient Analysis (preferably, in DMB).

To learn how to read a cat food label, please refer to [this file](#).

You recommend so many brands, but which one is truly the best? Why is rotation important?

Perfect canned food doesn't exist, all of them have pros and cons. By feeding a variety of brands, we lessen the negative effects of these cons, eg. we minimize the overexposure of not-so-great ingredients that canned food inevitably have. Also, brands

disappear from the market or have major supply/manufacturing issues, formulas change and recalls happen – you don't want to be forced to change your cats' diet suddenly. We urge you not to put your cats' health in the hands of one food provider only. In addition to that, variety deters boredom – no one likes to eat the same food everyday forever.

Please refer to the post for more info on [rotation](#) and see #rotationandvariety topics.

Can my cat eat fish-based food?

We don't recommend feeding fish, here's why: [No Fish For Cats](#). However, we do recommend offering weekly sardines or other small, oily fish as a source of Omega 3 fatty acids (one small fish a week), which is especially important for cats on mostly chicken based diet (which are high in Omega6).

I'm on a budget but I have several cats; what can I feed them?

Depending on where you live, the most economical option to feed a moisture-rich diet seems to be a homemade food.

If you're not interested in homemade, the best way to manage your cat food budget would be by buying canned food in bigger cans. In the US we know of several brands that have such cans: Dave's, American Journey, Nulo, Wellness (a tip: don't store opened cans in the fridge, transfer the food to the glass container to avoid metallic taste that some cats are sensitive to). Please also refer to the list of recommended canned food, the price per oz and per calories are listed there in the last columns. Consider stocking up during sales and promotions. The bigger the rotation, the easier it may be to feed cats what you can grab on sales. See #howmuch topics for posts about cat food budget.

Do you have a separate list of recommended kitten canned food?

All Life Stages food is appropriate for both adult cats and kittens. For kittens, you can choose any cat food from our list that is balanced for All Life Stages (column C). Please refer to our kitten file for more information on [Feeding Kittens](#).

I have a cat with a history of urinary issues, what can I feed her?

A moisture-rich diet is an absolute must for all cats, and it's especially life saving for cats with urinary issues. Please refer to the document in our files: [Urinary Issues](#)

If you have specific questions relating to your cats' condition, we invite you to join [Feline Lower Urinary Track group](#).

My cats have hairballs, is there anything I can do to prevent them?

We recommend using egg yolk and/or egg yolk lecithin as a preventative measure. Please review the following article: [How to best manage hairball](#)

What probiotics do you recommend?

Please review the following file: [Supplements](#)

... and post: [Microbiome](#)

My cats like grazing. How do I feed them?

Cats are not a grazing species and they don't need food being left out for them all day; they are hunters by nature and should have several meals a day, rather than an all-day buffet. There's no need for cats to have snacks available between their feedings. We encourage feeding scheduled meals, at least two or three times a day.

My cat only licks gravy and won't eat the rest of canned food. How can I make her eat a better food?

Blending/mixing pate canned food with warm water/broth/goat milk into gravy-like texture works great with many cats. Warm temperature dilutes fat making the food creamy and more palatable for cats.

I work long hours/I'm going for vacation. How can I continue to feed my cats a moisture-rich diet?

We recommend looking into [automatic feeders](#).

What about treats?

There's lots of options for healthy treats, please refer to our file: [Healthy treats](#)

Is pumpkin good for cats?

See [this file](#) for many reasons we don't recommend pumpkin in this group. I repeat, we don't recommend pumpkin for our obligate carnivores.

My cat has diarrhea, what do I do?

Please refer to [this article](#) for recommendations.